



EDDINGTON
RESIDENTS
ASSOCIATION



Eddington Residents' Association and Portal meeting
Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 9 June, 2020 at 4.30pm
Virtual meeting held via MS Teams

Those present

Eddington Residents' Association (ERA)

Pieter Desnerck, Chair

Catalina Brumann, Treasurer

Lis De Weerd, Secretary

Portal

Warren Forsyth, Operations Director

Alex Wynick, Communications Coordinator

Stephanie Jones, Executive Assistant

Apologies

Steve Carey, Officer for Eddington Residents' Association

1. WELCOME

Introductions made.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Minutes from previous meeting were written but never circulated, with apologies from Portal.

[ACTION: Going forward minutes to be circulated by Portal within two weeks of meeting, and March and June 2020 minutes to be circulated simultaneously.]

3. ACTIONS FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

Despite agreeing in the previous meeting that the ERA and Portal wished the meeting to be informal, to reduce any administrative burden, the feedback to ERA was that informal meetings are perceived as not being taken seriously. **[ACTION: ERA to type up a one-page terms of reference; minutes of meetings to be published on the ERA website.]**

Housing and rental model queries: AW provided requested information in an email after the last meeting, this will also be included in the minutes for the March meeting.

Result of resident survey: Portal is happy to run a virtual meeting/presentation of the 2019 resident survey results if ERA wish. **[ACTION: ERA to discuss and come back with response.]**

Exchange of news links for websites: ERA now has a FAQ section, one that specifically mentions that any personal issues are to go to Portal directly; also have a list of useful links **[ACTION: Portal to update its Useful Links page to include ERA website, ERA to publish information on survey on foodPark at Eddington, which closes at the end of the week.]**

4. REPORT OF ACTIVITIES

ERA:



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- No social activities happening in person; Eddington Eats is happening online, with a cookbook/recipes uploaded online; Eddington Open Doors is also online, once per month; Eddington Board Games has been harder to get people to engage with as people can play virtual board games with their family and friends outside of Eddington.
- The ERA has been supportive in the Castle COVID volunteer system which has seen a large number of volunteers.

Portal:

- Portal has been sending out regular communications to residents throughout lockdown.
- Staff continue to look after public spaces; there has been an increased communal touch-surface cleaning, but general communal cleaning has not been continued.
- Portal is starting to bring back extra services in external areas, with the plan to fully return back to work by 4 July. This includes repair works in communal areas and communal cleaning, but not routine maintenance in apartments, which will remain at essential-only repairs. Essential repairs are defined as works that leave the resident or the property at risk.
- Portal will distribute information to residents when we have further guidance. All works are dependent on the supply chain of our contractors so even when Portal activities have resumed not all repairs will be able to be conducted immediately.
- Unclear when routine maintenance within apartments is able to resume; waiting for Government and University guidance. When they are able to resume, all repairs to apartments will be triaged and dealt with in order of necessity.

5. MATTERS ARISING

A) Fire on Wileman Way on 20 May, 2020.

Following the fire on Wileman Way there have been concerns among residents about fire safety in the buildings, especially given the international population at Eddington who may not be familiar with UK fire standards.

Key Worker Housing buildings at Eddington are designed with fire-separating properties within the structure, so fires should be contained. Therefore, unless a fire is within a residents' individual apartment, residents should not evacuate. Therefore "general" fire alarms are not activated, as the safest thing is usually for residents to stay in their own apartments with doors and windows closed. If the Fire Brigade chose to evacuate the building then they will do this as per Fire Brigade protocol in a safe and controlled manner. **Fire Brigade instructions should override any standard fire safety information in the event of a fire.**

Since the fire there have been internal debriefings within Portal and actions to improve communications regarding fire safety have been agreed.

There is information available to Key Worker Housing residents on the Portal website, but this may not be read by residents. The individual fire escape routes provided in each Key Worker Housing



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apartment do not make clear what action to take if there is a fire elsewhere in the building. Following this feedback Portal is currently working on providing additional fire safety information to be displayed within apartments. **[ACTION: Portal to also double check that all Key Worker Housing apartments have their individual fire escape route signage.]**

ERA asked for the R rating of Key Worker Housing apartments, but there is no one single rating because of the different materials used in each building.

Portal has responded to all residential queries on this, and requested sight of any additional queries that the ERA has received on this topic. Portal has requested that all residents raise their queries directly with Portal.

B) Security of bikes and cars.

The parking lot gate repairs are ongoing, and will be addressed as soon as possible.

There have been incidents of bike theft, one resident was advised by police to gather all the reports of stolen bikes and send back to Portal.

All crimes at Eddington should be reported to the police on 101, as Portal is not able to assist in the investigation of any crime or recovery of any stolen property. Portal has a record of any issues raised to Portal, but may not have scope of all incidents that are reported directly to police.

An internal Portal meeting was held to discuss any further action that can be taken with regards to bike thefts. All Eddington bike stores are secure in the sense that there are working locking doors which require fob or swipe card access. There are no records of any issues with these features, so this means that the thieves are accessing the bike stores by tailgating or through doors being left open. Beyond urging residents to close the doors behind them, there is no clear answer to how to fix this. Bike sheds across the site will be reassessed to see if there is a safe way to make the doors close automatically without causing injury, or damage to bicycles, but this will only take place once Portal's full schedule of works are able to resume.

C) Considerate neighbours.

ERA would like to help communicate to residents about the need to be considerate; biggest number of complaints during lockdown have been about other residents abandoning trolleys, slamming bin lids, making too much noise, leaving rubbish in the hallways, etc. ERA is considering engaging the residents and get a building/block representative to be a spokesperson and first point of contact for residents in each building. Portal and ERA keen to ensure this role does not become vigilante policing of others' actions. **[ACTION: Portal and ERA to each think on this to see if there is any positive action to take.]**

ERA raised concerns about Portal staff smoking near apartments and throwing butts directly in bins – Portal is already reviewing staff smoking locations. Also reports of Portal staff parking in personal



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cars illegally. **[ACTION: Portal to communicate with staff that any works should be conducted via Portal vehicles and that personal vehicles must be parked legally at all times.]**

D) Events during lockdown.

ERA wonders if there is anything that can be organised together during the lockdown to help ease isolation from residents. The Development team is in the process of trying to bring back foodPark in a socially-distanced way, but there are no plans for events until further Government guidance on large social gatherings is received. **[ACTION: Portal and ERA to each think on this to see if there is any positive action to take.]**

6. AOB

ERA reports that when residents are moving out they feel pressured and harassed to take Portal's professional cleaning service, particularly with reference to COVID-19. Also confusion about whether taking the professional clean triggers the termination of the lease.

Lodge Property Service do strongly encourage residents to take up the offer of professional cleaning, as apartments often are not cleaned to the standard needed, leaving residents have to then pay for the additional cleaning. However residents should not feel harassed into taking the professional clean. **[ACTION: Portal to discuss with Lodge Property Services about how the offer of professional cleans are communicated.]**

7. NEXT MEETING

Next meeting will be in September, 2020.